

# PEOPLE POWER

THE OFFICIAL MONTHLY ORGAN OF NEWARK, NEW JERSEY'S EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING SYSTEM

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**T**here is a great paradox brewing in the fertile brains of the young people in America. On one hand I can sense the panic of abandonment they so obviously feel when they look into a future that will have little or nothing in it for untrained, skillless people. And on the other hand I perceive, as a growing number of society-watchers do, a numbness emanating from many youngsters which causes them to be extremely phlegmatic about not only their future, but indeed the future of the world.

This high panic, and this Valium-like spiritedness are inexorably joined to the heavy dose of insecurity we adults have laid upon our children's souls, as it were. And it must at times appear to our children that we have in many instances sold them out; that we have, in central cities across the country, gained a world (political of course) but lost our own souls.

Speculation about the truth or falsehood of my observations are be-

sides the point here, and begs the issue to a frazzle. For the point is (as well as the issue) that too many of our best young minds have either lost or have not even been able to develop the internal capacity to cope with the only society they have ever known.

A sense of their own worth (please don't think I mean the 1970's *Me-ism*, or any parts of the madness of *Disco-ology*) is an imperative they/we seemed to have overlooked. In so doing, I'm fearful that we also overlook the worth of what they have and what they can contribute to making this society respond to the basic needs of its people. In the face of what appears to be increasing insensitivity to an increasing array of economic problems we must, at all costs, maintain our integrity, our valuable humanity.

#### PATIENCE AND STRUGGLE

Contrary to so many of our dearest hopes, we are not leaving to our children a better world, only a fuller one. Full of all the material things we have believed would make for a Good Life.

Life, however, along with Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness, was not a guarantee, but is something that comes about only through hard struggle, and with deep patience as a cornerstone.

The strength of any people lies in the faith they have, in their ideas more than in their possessions. So while our children, including *Underclass* children, are healthier, dress better and have more opportunities for material advantages than some of their parents ever dreamed of, they seem to have foregone the pursuit of genuine happiness for the pursuit of a kind of kinetic frenzy.

Perhaps the many problems, conscious and unconscious, that we lay at the inexperienced feet of our young people is responsible for what seems to be an inordinant amount of lassitude among them. They lack the proper incentives and skills for many jobs—and we can find concrete reasons for it. But whose fault is it if they lack the ordinary concern that is everyone's responsibility? And if we are, as a society, unable to provide

healthy and wise council to healthy children, what will we be able to impart to handicapped children—who, by the way, need something much more than a training program in order to make it in a world of growing technology overlying a dog-eat-dog life-credo?

What we do about our children, the healthy and the not so healthy, we surely return to us... and what we do not do about them will (as we see via the omni-present media) also come back to us. We can, if we try, make it a sort of resurrection of our basic values or make it haunt our present and surely maim if not destroy our future. If we want to be in control of our destiny, our future, it can only be done through the knowledge and understanding that we pass on to our kids. I have no doubt that, as a society, we have the ability to do it. I'm beginning to wonder if enough of us can muster the unselfish will to do it... and all anyone knows for sure is that it is by our own efforts that we will sink or swim. But that is quite a lot to know if we really know it.



Newark Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) workers gathered on the steps of City Hall give the "Gung-Ho!" salute. These youngsters comprise the SYEP Census Task Force which will be stationed in key public areas throughout the city. They will query passersby as to their participation in the 1980 Census Poll and hopefully gather data and names on those who may have been missed in the count.

**T**he 1980 Census of Population and Housing is now almost finished. It is very important that the census be complete and correct.

If you believe that you (or anyone else in your household, including visitors) were not counted please contact your local U.S. Census Office. For Newark and its surrounding communities there is a local office at 449 Central Avenue, in the Essex County Welfare Office Building. The telephone number is 481-0921.

Or, you may contact the Census Bureau's Regional Office: New York - 151 William Street, New York, N.Y. 10038 (212) 620-3545; and Philadelphia (215) 597-9666.

Being counted helps New Jersey and your community to receive their "fair share" in many federally funded programs and services. Being counted helps businesses and government plan for the future. Do your part... ANSWER THE CENSUS!

## \$1 Million EDA Grant Employs Hundreds In Special Summer Project

**A** special federal grant of \$1,000,000 will enable the City of Newark to employ some 385 individuals in temporary Public Service Employment jobs for a two month duration this summer. Entitled "SPECIAL SUMMER PROJECT," it falls under the Summer Jobs Initiative (SJI) Program of the Economic Development Administration (EDA). The program offers positions which total 90% in the labor field; the remainder of jobs are in the secretarial and supervisory support systems areas.

Applications for the special project were accepted on July 9, 10, and the morning of the 11th. Under the aus-

pices of the Mayor's Office of Employment and Training, Public Service Employment Program (P.S.E.P.) staff worked diligently screening some 600 applicants.

Requirements for the 37 day employment program (July 14 through September 6, 1980) were proof of Newark residency and that the applicant be at least 18 years of age.

Employers from various City agencies, as well as non-profit organizations such as the Newark Chamber of Commerce selected employees on the afternoon of July 11, 1980. Some selected personnel received orientation the same afternoon, and began work on Monday, July 14, 1980, others started a few days later.

**J**ob opportunities for the June graduate and the summer jobseeker will be ample in certain occupations and industries. A willingness to relocate to the areas where the jobs are most plentiful will greatly enhance the applicant's chances of finding employment.

Graduates with degrees in technical fields such as accounting, computer science, and engineering, should find more jobs openings and higher salaries than the 1979 graduate did. Liberal arts majors will continue to be difficult to place. Without a speciality in a demanded area for example, mathematics, science, or special education, entrant teachers will not easily be absorbed into the labor market. However, according to a recent survey of New Jersey college placement offices, the overall outlook for June 1980 graduates appears about the same or better than it was last year.

Nationwide, according to the College Placement Council, job prospects for graduates are anticipated to be good-to-excellent in some technical fields and bleak for liberal arts. The greatest demand, as in the state, is in engineering, accounting, business, marketing, economics, computer science, and medicine. The tightest areas are law and teaching.

As in the past few years, most of the available summer jobs will be government sponsored or resort related. Present economic conditions will make it harder to find jobs in the private sector outside of the resort areas this summer.

Comprehensive Employment and Training Act programs are expected to generate over 30,000 jobs statewide for economically disadvantaged youth. Several thousand more jobs are anticipated among state and federal agencies, including military installations. The National Alliance of Businessmen hopes to pledge 3,500 summer jobs for the disadvantaged.

Nathan C. Heard



## Sometimes Slumflowers Bloom

**8**:00 A.M. The kid sat on the stone steps of the quasi-gothic public building looking as though he'd been sentenced to Life on Devil's Island.

The morning was very hot and humid. It was a day meant for lounging around a pool (if one had the means) or fighting for a small space at one of the public pools (as this slumflower most likely had to do). It was surprising to see anyone waiting at such an early hour in order to get assigned to one of the SYEP (Summer Youth Employment Program) jobs. The kids usually crowded the place later, creating a special, puerile chaos, thriving on it, and being frustrated by it. But they all knew how to wait for things... they'd been waiting most of their lives for the wheels of some program or other to turn in their favor. They knew how to wait, but thank goodness they weren't as good at it yet as so many of their elders had (sadly) turned out to be... the elders, many thought, had changed waiting into a life-style that even a comatose ascetic might admire.

As I approached to enter the building the kid looked up from long lashes, then quickly glanced away. It sometimes seems that youngsters have grown so deeply into themselves that they are quite embarrassed by small amenities. Unable to greet strangers comfortably, they look away, or act indifferent... and often unconsciously become as cold as they pretend to be. But a kid is still a kid, and all the ghettos and barrios in all the cities of the U.S.A. won't change the basic innocence that ultimately constrains most of them to respond to their society's negative influences with a matching positivity that, quite obviously, has nurtured us humans from Day #1, whenever that was.

I put on a smile. Smiles are good for kids and other living, growing things. I know for a fact that when humans are happy or are trying to convey pleasantries to others we

don't really talk—we sing. Our voices take on mellow musical qualities as we emphasize, lift and parry and thrust with our hearts, so to speak.

"Hello there!" I cheerfully thrust.

"Uuuuhm," he carefully parried with a non-committal grunt.

"How's it goin'?" I tried again. If I could establish eye-contact I knew I'd have him, as it were. Get a kid to look at you and you'll see, if you look hard enough, the hope of the world in them; the desire to be accepted, the dream of love. It's all there. "You get a gig for the summer?"

He only nodded. His eyes merely passed over me, registering all he wanted to know, but trying to reveal nothing of himself. The games we people do play. His lids returned to half-mast.

He was about sixteen and even though he was seated I could tell that he was near six-feet tall. He hadn't begun to fill out his lanky frame yet, but I could tell he soon would... a natural heavyweight.

"Where're you gonna work?" I asked.

"I dunno. Where they put me... I guess."

Okay. He didn't want to talk. I widened my smile, said so long, and took my leave. "Good luck, m'man"

12:00 Noon. He had been joined by several other teenagers. They sat talking the world to tatters, bad-mouthing the delays they'd faced (some of them for months) but hanging in there anyway.

One young man, wearing a Tee-shirt with his life's philosophy stamped across the chest, was holding forth:

"Man, I don't care what nobody say, this ain't nuthin but a game. They runnin games on us. I been here three days and I ain't seen no parts of any job-trainin..."

A young girl, about nineteen or twenty said, "What kinda job you want?"

"Anything," he replied. "I'm willin t' try anything. I got to make some bread."

The girl laughed. "That's just another way of saying you ain't got no particular skills, right?"

He bristled a bit: "I said I'd try anything..."

"Hi, everybody," I chimed, as I started out of the building on my way to lunch. The kid I had seen earlier and the girl were the only ones to respond. But the rest at least didn't appear hostile. In fact, they didn't appear to be much of anything, except alive. However, if life is to mean anything worthwhile it must be accompanied by hope and some occasional fulfillments beyond mere food, clothing and shelter. Most of these untaught, unemployed young people were alive, but only alive. The zesty spirit that ought naturally to have been kindling behind their youthful eyes, was too often only attainable with the spirits that came from weeds or dust or out of a bottle.

I stopped in front of the early bird. "You've been sittin here all this time?"

He looked directly at me for the first time. "Yeah. They told me to wait."

"What's your name," I asked.

"Albert Kenya McCoy," he answered firm and sure. For the first time I noticed that his eyes weren't dull and clouded (pretending a mystery about himself that, given the exigencies of his Underclass existence, was not very mysterious at all. In a life of poverty, where was there ever a place for mystery anyway?) There was an intensity in him that I had missed before. His eyes were clear and deep. There was strength to match the vulnerability as well.

"Okay, Albert Kenya McCoy," I said. "It looks like your waiting is just about over. They're gonna start processing the M's first thing this afternoon. You'll probably begin working on Monday."

The Tee-shirted youngster spoke up: "Doin what? He git a easy gig, man?"

"I don't care if it's easy or not, I just wanna job..."

"Aw, c'mon, Albert—eve'ybody

wanna easy thang," Tee-shirt said.

"Speak for yourself, Dookey," the young girl admonished. "I just wanna git one foot in the door and I betcha I'll git the rest of me in eventually."

"That's the way I feel," Albert Kenya agreed.

Dookey put a mock sneer on his face, wheeled around to place his back to them, and bopped away toward a hot-dog cart that pulled to the curb. "Well, that's y'all's problem," he threw over his shoulder. "I gots t' git my summer-thang together... I'ma be looking good for the Labor-Day bus-ride, baby... Yeah!"

Albert Kenya watched Dookey walk away. He shook his handsome head and said to me and the young girl:

"I think I feel sorry for the dude but I don't know if I really should or not."

"Whatcha mean?" she asked. I was curious to know, too.

"Well, I been knowin him all our lives. And he's always wanted a job, temporary, just so he can buy clothes and stuff like that. He don't never think about the future, but he have just as good-a time's anybody else. Now, I really want a job so I can have a decent future. But me'n Dookey is still in the same boat, right?"

I was going to try and set Albert Kenya straight, but the young girl came in like a champ when she said:

"Hell no, y'all ain't in no same boat. If that doofus ain't plannin for a future, he sho-nuf won't have one. And that's on the real-side. So don't think you and him's the same except for your present—I'm here, too, but only for now. We can do better if we think better."

5:00 P.M. It was still a hot day when I walked out of the building... All of the SYEP kids were gone... until tomorrow, until next year...? until we adults, somehow, learn ourselves how to de-programize our kids, to measure their success within the context of a system instead of within the folds of a program...?

The young girl said it all: *Until we think better.* Indeed, some Slumflowers bloom.



## SPECIAL SYEP PROGRAM PREPARES HANDICAPPED YOUTH FOR WORK, AND HELPS BREAK BARRIERS

**"U**nfortunately this society has helped to encourage stigmatization upon the handicapped. For many youngsters that serve, too many years of coming in contact with pity and shame (shown toward them often by family members) has rendered them self-pitying, as well as insecure," stated Mr. Robert Robinson, Program Director of the Youth Chance program, a special component of the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP), which is funded through the Mayor's office of Employment and Training (MOET).

Mr. Robinson went on to explain that: "We here at the Catholic Community Services, of which the program is a part, are trying to break some of the barriers that have been faced by many other handicapped persons all of their lives."

Youth Chance is located at 17 Mulberry St. on the third floor of the Mount Carmel Guild Mental Health Center, and offers various services to the deaf, visually impaired, and individuals with communication disorders.

The Youth-Chance component of SYEP is now in its 15th year. Initially the program was very small, with approximately 40 or 50 participants. Mr. Robinson talked about the rapid growth of the program from an in-school Winter program to a year-round program dealing with out-of-school youth as well.

Youth Chance services youth aged 14-21; the main emphasis for those

not in school is skills training, and continuation of one's education.

"In the beginning the program was for low-income youth period," Robinson said. He went on to explain that it was several years later that the need for a special program for handicapped youth was fully realized. Presently the majority of young people involved in the program are special education youth and those with hearing impairments.

"The Mayor's Office took over the entire summer program two years ago. And because of our support services for the handicapped we took over the exclusive servicing of handicapped youngsters for the SYEP program," Robinson said. The program this summer has hired 350 young people.

Ms. Deborah Greh, is a Special Education Teacher at a high school in Scotch Plains during the in-school months. For the past seven years she has devoted her time and effort to the Youth Chance program. As public relations person, Ms. Greh keeps abreast of all activities that her youngsters are involved in.

As public relations coordinator, Ms. Greh visits all job sites and becomes well-acquainted with faculty and SYEP workers. At the end of each summer—a newsletter is compiled by Greh, a montage of activities that the handicapped youth have been involved in speaks for itself with articles and photographs of the summer achievements. Last year's newsletter revealed young people deeply involved with helping themselves and others.

As a special education teacher, Greh is familiar with the plight of handicapped persons. She is aware of their immediate problems—problems that are encountered from day to day because of an insensitive society. She talked about the City's affirmative action program that sends monitors out to survey buildings accessibility for disabled persons. However, Greh, Robinson, and others involved with the handicapped know that not enough has been done.

"It only cost from 2-3% more to build a structure that is accessible to the handicapped. Buildings equipped with entrance ramps for wheel-chair individuals and persons on crutches, low-level drinking fountains and phone booths would make it easier for disabled people to work in and visit the structures," said Greh.

Robinson explained that SYEP workers confined to wheel-chairs are in this building, because it is barrier free meaning that all facilities are constructed to meet the needs of the handicapped and unaffected individuals, be they blind, deaf, in wheel-chairs, whatever."

A large majority of Youth Chance SYEP workers are located at United Hospitals, South 9th St. unit, Newark



Youth Chance Director, Robert Robinson

Beth Israel Hospital; John F. Kennedy Special Elementary School, So. 10th St., and Neighborhood Council, Hunterdon St., as well as in various social service agencies.

### COURAGE BREAKS BARRIERS

Johnny Blount has been a Youth Chance SYEP employee for four years. Born with cerebral palsy, he did not walk until the age of seven, and doctors told his parents that he would never walk. During that time, relatives attempted to convince his mother that an institution was the proper place for a child with his affliction. But Johnny's mother's convictions that her son would "make it" were strong, and her son has indeed achieved wonders in the face of all odds he was up against from birth.

Johnny is an extremely loquacious young man and, Mr. Robinson stated, that Johnny's speech as tremendously improved over the years that he has been with the summer program.

"When I was fourteen, I went down to SYEP, formerly known as SPEDY, (32 Green St.) to apply for a job. But I was told that 'We can't hire youth like you.' So I was not able to work that summer—but I really wanted to work because I wanted to show all those people who felt sorry for me or made fun of me over the years that I was capable of doing something for my own self," said Johnny whose dream was realized one year later when someone told him about the Youth Chance program.

A good-humored young man, Johnny's courage has helped others as well as himself. He enjoys assisting his peers, but more than that he goes out of his way to explain his condition and his feelings toward life to insensitive "normal" young people. He believes that the mis-education, or non-education that has been received by inner-city youth in relation to the handicapped has hurt people like himself a great deal. Johnny's own words are: "There are so many different kinds of people in this world, and you should be able to deal with all of them."

### THE ROAD TO ACHIEVEMENT MAY BE A LITTLE HARDER

"I was told a very long time ago by a teacher of mine that: 'It's really gonna be hard for you because you are handicapped. But you learn how to deal with yourself first and you can achieve anything that you want to; so, you better get out there and show all those normal people that you can work to!' And relates Johnny with a smile, "that's just what I did."

Robinson and Greh talked about the increasing number of handicapped individuals that are banding together and demanding equal rights. "They are increasing in their strength and unity and you will see it in the near future. We are sure that Johnny will be right up front when they do," Robinson said.

A staunch supporter of rights for the handicapped, Johnny has proved to be an individual who will speak up for what he wants on behalf of classmates and himself.

The young SYEP worker spoke about two incidents he encountered as a student whereby his leadership abilities brought about positive action. "I rallied a group of students last year at my high school to get a bus schedule changed; and to bring wheel-chair and walking students together."

"The bus was coming far too early to take us to school. I felt that we should not have been subjected to arriving at school from 30-45 minutes before classes began, when we could have still been at home resting or doing work at home," stated Johnny, who gathered enough student support to have the bus schedule changed to a more feasible time.

The young cerebral palsy victim also convinced administrators that it would be better if wheel-chair students and walking students rode in one bus. His attitude of equal treatment to all showed through in this noble gesture. When commended for what he did, Johnny just replies that "I believe that people should be able to deal with one another regardless of their differences, and I wanted us to all be together; I hoped that other classmates felt the same, they did so we got everyone together."

Many young people who cope with severe disabilities like Johnny realize the importance of an education. The Youth Chance participant talked about his burning desire to obtain a good education and skill enabling him to compete with anyone. One of the happiest days in his life was when he graduated from Branch Brook Special Education Elementary School in Newark, three years ago. Currently, he is eagerly awaiting graduation from A. Harry Moore Special Education High School in Jersey City. Johnny secretly aspires to become a carpenter, although staff at Youth Chance would like to see the brilliant young man attend college first.

Robinson, Greh and other concerned staff at Youth Chance would love to see more Johnny's emerge out of the shadows of handicapped misunderstanding into the sunlight of hope and courage. "Unfortunately, we have more youth who have not come to grips with their handicap, who want to be helped when they don't need it. We are grateful to the Mayor's Office and others who have assisted us in the past, and we want

them to realize that there can be more Johnny's as a result of this program," Robinson said.

One very important point that Greh wanted to get across was the fact that the Youth Chance SYEP workers are under the close supervision of individuals highly sensitive to their special needs; but at the same time these individuals make the youngsters independent because they realize that they have to open many unlocked doors and must break many barriers.

"I have never in my seven summers here visited a job site where the youth were not busy. And we all know for a fact that this is not true with the regular SYEP program," said Greh, who went on to express her and Robinson's wish that more parents of handicapped youngsters would allow them as much independence as they can accommodate.

Johnny's parents have not only been loving and a motivating factor for him, they have given him an opportunity to go out and do things for himself, such as catching a bus, going shopping for himself, and spending time with unaffected youngsters, which is very important for these young people," Robinson said admirably.

The Youth Chance program wants to sincerely thank all individuals who have been involved with the program over the years. Special people who have the emotional stamina to work with these youngsters are to be highly commended.

1981 will celebrate the year of the handicapped person. The Youth Chance program is about celebrating people who's sincerest desire is to express to the real world their desire to be accepted for their capabilities, not their incapacities.



Johnny Blount (l) Youth Chance SYEP Worker and Director Robert Robinson (r)



Pamela McCormick, Youth Chance SYEP worker files medical reports.



Evelyn Davis, Youth Chance SYEP worker performs duties at microfilm machine.







## "Aerospace Day" Proclamation

Alonzo Kittrels, Executive Superintendent of Newark Public Schools System receives the "Aerospace Day" Proclamation from (l. to r.) Harry L. Wheeler, Director M.O.E.T. and Colonel Robert King, Aerospace Coordinator. Mary Darden, Deputy Manager, Council For Airport Opportunities, Mary Willis, Director, Council For Airport Opportunities, Margaret Kiernan, Chairperson — Aerospace Curriculum Committee.

**O**n Thursday, July 3, 1980 Alonzo Kittrels, Executive Superintendent of Newark Public Schools was presented with a copy of the "Aerospace Day" proclamation. The original was delivered on June 3, 1980, to Colonel Robert King, Coordinator of the Aerospace Education Intermodal Transportation Center who made the presentation.

It read: "By order of Mayor Kenneth A. Gibson, June 3rd, 1980 is proclaimed Aerospace Day."

Aerospace, The Mayor's Office of

Employment and Training (MOET), and the Council for Airport Opportunity expressed appreciation to Mr. Kittrels, Board of Education President Carl Sharif and other Board of Education representatives who helped finance the Aerospace Day Conference.

On behalf of the Mayor, MOET Director Harry L. Wheeler presented Aerospace with the proclamation and delivered the keynote address. Wheeler stated that the Mayor perceives the Newark Aerospace Center as a "beacon of light in the educative process for Newark Youth."

The Aerospace Education Inter-

modal Transportation Center, located at Newark International Airport is devoted to training inner-city youth in various areas of aviation, whereby they may obtain feasible employment in the aerospace industry and supportive service fields.

The Aerospace program was implemented in 1972. MOET, in conjunction with the Council for Airport Opportunity Inc., have worked diligently over the years to make this program a success.

The Center, whose coordinator is retired Air Force Colonel Robert King, offers students who attend on a daily basis a high caliber of technical train-

ing. Model space capsules, special morse code equipment, radio relay systems, a radio that receives FAA Control Tower Communications at Newark International Airport and electronic computer games are all a part of the learning format.

On hand for Kittrels' presentation were: Mary E. Willis, Director, the Council for Airport Opportunity; Mary Dardin, Deputy Manager, Airport Opportunity; and Margaret Kiernan, Chairperson, Aerospace Curriculum Committee.

Mr. Kittrels was also presented with the June 3rd conference report, and numerous letters of response which commented on the success of the Aerospace Day that was recognized by many who attended.

Mr. Wheeler then addressed all in attendance. He called the Aerospace program a "milestone." He firmly believes that the basis of democracy survives because of the public education system. "It collectively preserves the society—and we must all work to make it better," he said. Wheeler then presented Kittrels with pamphlets developed by the Council for Airport Opportunity Inc. in cooperation with the Mayor's Office of Employment and Training.

Mr. Kittrels expressed his heartfelt appreciation, commitment, and support to the Aerospace program. Explaining the necessity of continued growth for such a program he explained that "We must expand and improve on similar opportunities and additional linkage for our youngsters in the area of avionics." The Board of Ed's Executive Director made mention of the fact that he had never been on an airplane until he was 22 years of age. "Opportunities for youth have really opened up in the area of airport opportunities and you here today are largely responsible for the achievements made in this area," he stated.



Mary Willis, Council for Airport Opportunity Director, flanked by (l.) Margaret Kiernan, Chairperson - Aerospace Curriculum Committee and (R.) Col. Robert King, Aerospace Director, plus student workers of the Aerospace Program, observe the variety of rockets just before they were launched on July 30 at the Nike Testing Base in Mountainside, N.J. The rocket launchings were part of Trilside Park's special Wednesday matinee series. Trilside Park is a nature and science compound located in the beautiful Watchung Mountain Reservation area. In addition to building current rocket designs, the Aerospace Program has been contacted to test prototypes of new aeronautical designs.

Pictured at right, Aerospace students watch the smoke trail of a launched missile and others prepared for take off.





## CETA Linkage Program

**T**o the "rescue" comes the paltry, but determined and spirited efforts of the Governor's 1% Coordination and Linkage Program, directed toward inducing a feeling of survival and hopefulness in the ranks of recent CETA layoffs and current Newark participants scheduled to be terminated shortly.

Under the provisions of the Reauthorization of the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) of 1978, prime sponsors, as the City of Newark, are required to insure that every effort is made to provide training to those employed in their programs.

Newark's Mayor's Office of Employment and Training, (MOET) together with Essex County CETA and Essex County College are joining in this educational skills training venture to foster a higher rate of private sector job placement.

The CETA Reauthorization Act of 1978 imposes new limitations in terms of the length of time participants may remain employed in CETA jobs; consequently, these participants will

ultimately be scheduled to make applications for unsubsidized public or private sector jobs, or termination from the CETA payroll. Thus the Linkage Program is designed to provide CETA participants with an excellent opportunity to either acquire or upgrade marketable skills.

Waymon T. Jessie, Newark's Acting Director of the City's Public Service Employment Program (PSEP) located at 1 Lincoln Avenue, in an appraisal of the Linkage Program, said recently "I think the concept of improving and acquiring skills for under skilled persons to be of immediate importance, however," he went on to declare, "the present program does not reach an appreciable number of CETA participants in need of technical skills and information required to perform a specific job in the private service sector."

On the other hand Jessie was extremely high in his appraisal of the P.S.E.P. Counseling staff, headed by Betty J. Foster, who are involved in processing the several hundred CETA and former CETA participants scheduled to enter the Linkage Program at Essex County College (ECC)

in Fall '80 semester. The major inputs into the operations of the Linkage Program are coordinated by three talented young Black women executives under the jurisdiction of M.O.E.T. and Essex County College which include Elsie Stevenson, M.O.E.T., Manager P.S.E.P. Operations Unit; Shiela Oliver, M.O.E.T., Manager Office of Youth Services and Special Projects; and Nabeelah Abdul-Ghafur, Director of the Linkage Program for Essex County College.

Oliver explained that in the continuing process of registering CETA enrollees for the Linkage Program, applicants may enroll in any course being offered at the junior college. P.S.E.P. Counselors, work closely with Oliver's people in testing CETA participants, many of whom have not finished high school and might be deemed to failure if they took courses above their level of learning.



*Shiela Oliver, M.O.E.T., Manager Office of Youth Services and Special Projects*

Oliver went on to explain what a counselor might say to a CETA participant, "Well I know you want to take Business 201, but your test score in math says that you could use a little build up of your skills, why don't you take a 100 level or a remedial level business course and then take an introductory course to business." This way, it was explained, a student can get his or her skills together. It was also discovered that most students applied for courses at ECC that had something to do with their CETA jobs.

For example, participants working in the City Welfare Department were found taking Sociology and Psychology courses. It was explained that many CETA participants in the beginning were reluctant about taking courses to upgrade their skills, and especially about taking courses on the college level. Oliver further pointed out that one basic education course of the participant's choice is given to him because she believes that if the applicant is encouraged to take low level reading and math classes, he is certain to lose interest if a subject is not offered in which he has an interest.

Oliver also believes that if a CETA applicant for private employment can show that he or she has attended school, the future employer is going to look at such an application in a different light. Deep down in the gut, she explained, this country is still a "snob" for education.

### ELSIE STEVENSON AND P.S.E.P. LINKAGE PROGRAM



*Elsie Stevenson, M.O.E.T., Manager, PSEP Operations Unit*

The initial processing of the Linkage Program begins with Elsie Stevenson, Manager of P.S.E.P. Operations Unit, located at 1 Lincoln Avenue.

Stevenson's staff is responsible for contacting CETA participants at their job sites and advising them of the opportunities for job placement through registering with the Linkage Program.

P.S.E.P. has processed an excess of 500 CETA participants since the Linkage Program started in November 1979.

Many of the participants, after termination from their CETA jobs, have been extended an opportunity to continue their education, the result of Essex County College presidential waiver.

Nabeelah Abdul Ghafur Director of the Linkage Program at Essex County College is the third link in the Public Service Employment Skills Training Program. The program is described as emanating from the Governor's discretionary funds: one per cent of all CETA money in the state must be spent in behalf of these local and former CETA employees referred to Essex County College from the Mayor's Office of Employment and Training (MOET), and the New Jersey State Department of Employment and Training (DET) representing the Essex County CETA Program.

The Linkage Program Director describes the CETA educational schedule as being designed to assess the academic and career skills of CETA participants by administering basic skills tests (and a career survey inventory) which capitalizes the student's work history, current vocational skills and career aspirations.

Ghafur says, if the Linkage Program is refunded in November of this year, the college hopes to expand services to include customized training. By this she claims the widening of training resources to encompass private industry (on-the-job-training), and other institutions offering vocational training in Essex County.

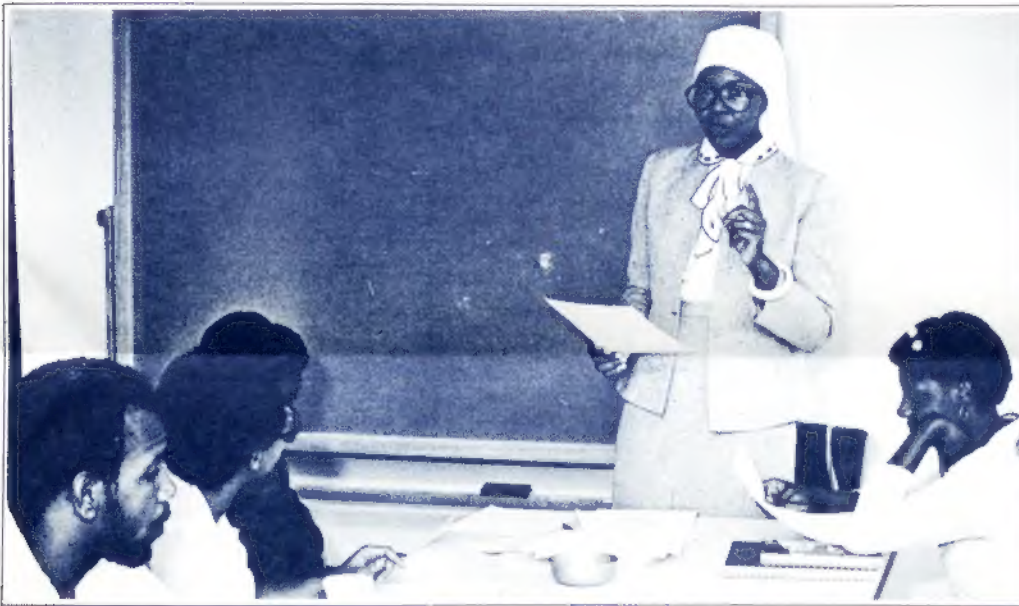
Ghafur, a former Counselor at Essex County College who was appointed Director of the Linkage Program in October of last year, went on to explain that Essex County will attempt to assist the prime sponsors, M.O.E.T. and DET, with develop-



*Betty J. Foster, Manager of PSEP Counseling Unit*

*continued on page 8*





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Ms. Nabeelah Abdul-Ghafur, CETA Linkage Program

ment and placement in permanent jobs both in the private and public sectors. She estimated that approximately 700 students had been serviced since January of 1980 and claims of that number, a majority of them started and completed at least 12 credits, or three basic subjects. She also made known that the Linkage Program had encouraged a number

of students to return to college to complete their study for a degree (Associate Degree).

Anaberta Melina, Spanish speaking P.S.E.P. Payroll Clerk who is working out of P.S.E.P. headquarters at 1 Lincoln Avenue, presented a representative statement, disclosing job placement and educational benefits gained as a result of having enrolled in

the Linkage Program.

She said, "I took advantage of the Linkage Program when it was offered to us recently at PSEP headquarters. By attending classes at Essex County College it can be said that I've benefited greatly from the courses of study. I have gained a better understanding of many things that I didn't know before, like bettering my English essen-

tials. I believe that when you apply for a better job, or a permanent position in the private sector, you must be qualified and prepared with some kind of training. You must have something to show or else someone better qualified will get the job.

I also acquired a substantial amount of knowledge in word processing. Knowing the word processing machine and understanding it alone — like how to design and feed a program into the machine — is of great value to any person. I think I have bettered myself in many ways, and I hope to continue in my learning. Other CETA participants should take advantage of this opportunity keeping in mind that education is a valuable tool."



Anaberta Melina, P.S.E.P. Payroll Clerk

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